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HOW FOOD SURPLUSES ARE MADE AVAILABLE TO ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS



Surplus foods acquired by the U. S. Department of Agriculture are made available to several groups of eligible recipients, including many aging persons, through the Direct Distribution Program. The operation of the program and the eligibility requirements are described in this booklet.

Prepared by the
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
in cooperation with
FEDERAL COUNCIL ON AGING

THE DIRECT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

The U. S. Department of Agriculture acquires supplies of food and other farm products in the operation of its price-support and surplus-removal programs. To make constructive use of these surplus foods, the Department makes them available to eligible persons both in this country and abroad through its Direct Distribution Program.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

Nationally, the program is administered by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. The Department arranges for and finances necessary processing or packaging of the commodities, and pays the cost of transporting them to central receiving locations in the States.

In the States, the program is administered by an appropriate agency of the State government, designated by the Governor, operating under an agreement with the USDA. The State agencies are responsible for the certification of eligible recipients, within the broad standards of eligibility established by the USDA in accordance with the legislation authorizing the program. The State agencies order the commodities, which are delivered by USDA in carlot quantities to central distribution points in the State. The State agencies also arrange for the receipt and storage of commodities and for their ultimate distribution to eligible recipients.

Details of operation vary among the States. Many States operate the program through local public welfare authorities, who make the actual distribution of food to eligible recipients. Private welfare agencies may enter into the program as referral agencies and to assist in distributing the foods, so long as the public agency maintains responsibility for the operation of the program.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR FOODS

The laws authorizing this program make donated surplus foods available to:

- Nonprofit lunch programs in schools of high school grade and under.
- Needy Indians on reservations.
- Charitable institutions serving needy persons, including hospitals, homes for the aging, and other types of institutions for the needy.
- State and local public welfare agencies, for distribution to needy families. To receive commodities, individuals or families must be certified to be in economic need of them by the local public welfare authority. If they meet this standard, either persons receiving public assistance or persons not receiving any form of public assistance may be eligible to receive foods.
- Groups organized to provide relief for victims of drought, floods, and other natural disasters.

WHAT FOODS ARE DISTRIBUTED

The foods distributed are those acquired under the price-support and surplus-removal programs and, therefore, do not constitute a full or complete diet. The commodities are donated as a supplement to the normal diet and vary from time to time, depending on acquisitions under these agricultural programs. In addition, school lunch programs have first priority on the available supplies. If only limited quantities of a food are available, distribution may be limited to schools.

During July 1956, the following foods were available for distribution to needy persons and families: butter, cheese, nonfat dry milk, rice, cornmeal, wheat flour, and dry beans.

HOW TO TAKE PART IN THE PROGRAM

While the USDA makes the Direct Distribution Program available throughout the country, many local areas and some States do not participate in all phases of it. Some factors which influence a community's or State's decision to participate in the family phase of the program are the probable caseload, and the availability of local food distribution facilities and of funds and personnel for supervision and operation of the program.

Persons who are interested in receiving foods under this program should consult their local welfare authorities to determine if the program is in operation locally, and if they are eligible to participate.

Persons who are interested in making the program available to needy persons, including aging persons who may qualify, should also contact their local welfare authorities. In many cases they may be able to assist in the operation of a program already established, or they may help local and State officials to determine need for the development of a program in localities where one is not now available.

Further information about the distribution program can be obtained from the State welfare agency at your State capital, or from the Agricultural Marketing Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.